

Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative

# THE GRID

**P.O. Box 709  
(104 Dewitt Ave., East)  
Mattoon, Illinois 61938**

**Phone:** 217-235-0341  
or **Toll-Free:**  
1-888-661-CMEC (2632)  
**Office hours:**  
Monday-Friday  
7:30a.m. - 4:30p.m.

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**To Report an Outage  
call #888-661-2632**

**Find Your Name  
and Win \$50**

Find your name hidden inside this issue of The Grid and receive a **\$50 bill credit**. Credit must be claimed by the end of each month in which this newsletter is published.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



**YOUTH TOUR**

**2024**  
**ILLINOIS**

CMEC is sponsoring “Youth to Washington” and “Youth to Springfield” programs along with its sister cooperatives across the state. Information was sent to area high school guidance counselors and principals. Selected students will be introduced to government and the political process. Applications for this experience of a lifetime are being reviewed. Stay tuned for our lucky winners, who will attend Youth Day in March as well as Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., in June.





## Payment Arrangements

Please contact us if you have a past due balance on your bill. We are here to help you. Arrangements can be made by emailing [info@cmeccoop.com](mailto:info@cmeccoop.com). Be sure to include your name, account number, the amount to be paid and the date you are requesting to pay it.



CMEC will award six \$500 scholarships and a \$1,000 Randall Beasley Memorial Scholarship in 2024.

**Deadline to apply is  
April 30, 2024.**

Applications are available on our website or can be requested by emailing [cbradbury@cmeccoop.com](mailto:cbradbury@cmeccoop.com).

## Rate Increase in 2024

Your board of directors are reviewing the CMEC Cost-of-Service Study and our current rate structure. More information will be provided in The Grid as it becomes available. **Sue Weddle**

## 2024 Incentives

### CMEC will have two rebates for 2024:

- \$100 for a 30-gallon or higher electric water heater
- 25% with a \$250 maximum for energy-efficient or conserving purchases or projects

Email [info@cmeccoop.com](mailto:info@cmeccoop.com) for details or forms.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Area rugs are an easy, cost-effective solution to cold floors. Adding area rugs to hard-surface flooring can add warmth to any room and keep your feet cozy on cold winter days.

Choose rugs made from wool or other natural fibers and plush or high-pile textures for the most insulation. Place rugs in areas where you need additional warmth, like the foot of a bed or under a coffee table.

Area rugs can enhance the aesthetic of your home and keep you cozier.



## How Can I Pay My Bill?

Pay your bill by downloading the SmartHub app or linking to SmartHub from our website, [www.cmec.coop](http://www.cmec.coop). Other ways to pay include calling the office at 217-235-0341 (option #2), signing up for autopay or dropping your payment in one of our drop boxes.



## Wintry Weather Means Higher Bills

Members reach out to us more often this time of year after receiving higher than normal bills. Wintry weather means your heater runs more often and works harder to keep your home at a comfortable temperature. Be careful using any type of space heater as they can increase your usage and increase your bill even more. Fireplace blowers, electric blankets, heat lamps, outdoor lighting, tank heaters, gaming systems, new appliances and humidifiers are some common culprits, too. The good news is you can save money by using less energy and adjusting your thermostat down during cool weather and up during warm weather to give your HVAC system and your wallet a break. Email [info@cmec.coop](mailto:info@cmec.coop) for 101 Ways to Save from Touchstone Energy.

## Reminders

- We know it's cold out there, but remember in addition to safety concerns, **space heaters can increase your energy bills.**
- If you are **considering solar**, contact us first to get all the facts.
- **Building a Home?** Visit [www.cmec.coop](http://www.cmec.coop) and click on Member Services, Energy Efficiency, Building the Home of Your Dreams, for great ideas on how to build an energy-efficient home.

An infographic titled "ICE ON POWER LINES IS A WEIGHTY SUBJECT" with a snowflake icon. It features three panels showing power lines under normal conditions, then sagging under ice, and finally the top line melting after the bottom line. Below this, it states "ON A 300-FOOT SPAN OF 1-INCH-THICK POWER LINES" and lists weights: 1/2 inch of ice adds 281 pounds, 1 inch adds 749 pounds, and 2 inches adds 2,248 pounds. It also includes "WHEN ICE MELTS" and "OTHER ICE FACTS" sections. The bottom of the infographic features the Safe Electricity.org logo and source information.

**Normal power line**      **Lines weighed down by ice**      **Top line melted after bottom line**

### ICE ON POWER LINES IS A WEIGHTY SUBJECT

When it comes to getting electricity across power lines and into homes, ice can be a force to be reckoned with.

#### ICE ON DISTRIBUTION LINES

Ice can quickly lead to broken power poles and other pole equipment. Ice can also make falling tree branches 30x heavier and much more likely to break power lines.

#### ON A 300-FOOT SPAN OF 1-INCH-THICK POWER LINES

- 1/2 inch of ice adds 281 pounds of weight
- 1 inch of ice adds 749 pounds of weight
- 2 inches of ice adds 2,248 pounds of weight

#### WHEN ICE MELTS

Melting ice can cause power outages. If ice on the bottom (neutral) line melts before the lines above, it can cause the lines to touch.

#### OTHER ICE FACTS

- Damage can begin when ice exceeds 1/4 of an inch
- 1/2 inch of ice can cause a line to sag up to 12 inches
- Pressure can also be caused by a broken tree limb
- Both ice and melting ice can cause power outages

**Safe Electricity.org**

Source: Jerri Ingarten-Whitley and Victory Electric Cooperative

# UP, UP AND AWAY

## CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES TO A BALLOON RELEASE

Everyone has great intentions when planning a balloon release. However, as soon as balloons are let go, they can go from sentiment to hazard.

**ALTHOUGH BEAUTIFUL TO LOOK AT, BALLOONS CAN DAMAGE THE POWER GRID AND CAUSE POWER OUTAGES.**

### LATEX AND MYLAR BALLOONS AND ATTACHED STRINGS & RIBBONS CAN:

- Threaten birds and animals (via ingestion and entanglement).
- Harm marine life.
- Obstruct the flight path or cause damage to an airplane's engine.
- Cause ground and ocean trash.
- Create plastic pollution.

### ACCORDING TO THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS:

- What goes up, must come down: balloons will fall back to earth either semi-deflated or in tiny and hard-to-retrieve fragments.
- Only an estimated 5% of all released balloons return intact.
- Even if balloons are marketed as degradable, they may take several weeks to break down.

### ALTERNATIVES TO BALLOONS:

- Blow bubbles.
- Light candles.
- Throw biodegradable confetti.
- Plant trees.
- Plant flowers.
- Paint stones.

Monthly Board Meeting Minutes can be viewed on our website: [cmec.coop](http://cmec.coop)